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# PRESS RELEASE

## New USAID Mission Director for Central Asian Republics

**ALMATY, AUGUST 22, 2007.** –Today William M. Frej assumed his duties as the new director for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Regional Mission for the Central Asian Republics. Mr. Frej was sworn into these duties at the USAID headquarters in Washington last month. As mission director for the USAID regional office, Frej will work to strengthen partnerships between the U.S. and Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. These efforts will support economic growth, promote democracy and address health and other social issues. Under Frej's leadership, the Central Asian Republic regional office will also work to increase regional trade between South and Central Asia, especially in the energy sector.

Acting Deputy Administrator James Kunder, who presided over the swearing in ceremony, noted how Frej's leadership has been essential to USAID programs in Asia, including the humanitarian response and recovery from the tsunami. "I can speak from personal experience that USAID is sending one of its most talented leaders to Central Asia," said Kunder. "Bill has had a distinguished 20 year career with USAID, serving in leadership positions overseas and in Washington, D.C." Prior to this assignment, Frej was the USAID Mission Director for Indonesia, where he led the U.S. government relief and reconstruction efforts following the 2004 historic tsunami and earthquake and was awarded the Presidential Meritorious Honor Award.

Frej's other USAID assignments have included Mission Director in Poland, Regional Urban Development Officer for Central and Eastern Europe, and several positions within the USAID Mission in Jakarta. He also served on President Bush's foreign policy team as the first Director for Development Issues at the National Security Council in the White House.

Before joining USAID, Frej served as an administrator for the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board and as a policy planner with Berkeley's National Housing and Economic Development Law Project in California.

Frej holds a bachelor's degree in Architecture from the University of Arizona and a master's degree in City and Regional Planning from the University of California, Berkeley.

USAID began providing assistance to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan in 1992. Since that time, the American people through USAID have provided nearly \$1.5 billion in programs that assist the development of the economic sector, education and healthcare systems, and democratic institutions in Central Asia. For more information on USAID's programs in the Central Asian Republics, visit [www.usaid.gov/locations/europe\\_eurasia/car](http://www.usaid.gov/locations/europe_eurasia/car).

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